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ABSTRACT

This paper presents model reading and writing standards that express what each student in Colorado should know and be able to do in order to become fluent readers, writers and speakers; be able to communicate effectively; recognize the power of language; and be at ease communicating in an increasingly technological world. The six standards in the paper are: (1) students read and understand a variety of materials; (2) students write and speak for a variety of purposes and audiences; (3) students write and speak using conventional grammar, usage, sentence structure, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling; (4) students apply thinking skills to their reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing; (5) students read to locate, select, and make use of relevant information from a variety of media, references, and technological sources; and (6) students read and recognize literature as a record of human experience. For each of the six standards, the paper presents a brief description, a rationale, and specifics for grades K-4, 5-8, and 9-12. Contains 22 references. (RS)

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MODEL CONTENT STANDARDS

READING & WRITING

CS 013 512

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INTRODUCTION

Colorado Model Content Standards for Reading and Writing

The ability to communicate clearly – to read, write, speak, and listen – forms the core of human culture. Reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills are essential tools for learning, for success in the workplace, for enriching and expanding our lives, and for responsible citizenship.

Language skills are particularly critical in the area of education. Through language abilities, students understand the academic content areas. Success in learning is grounded in students acquiring solid knowledge and skills in reading, writing, speaking, and listening. The Colorado Model Content Standards set high expectations in these areas for all students.

Reading and writing also have the power to bridge time and place. We remain in contact with people who lived before us through literature and other written records of human experience. We reach toward our future by knowing how to locate, read, and make use of an ever-increasing amount of information.

More than a year of public response and discussion has resulted in these model Reading and Writing standards. These standards express what each student in Colorado should know and be able to do in order to

- become fluent readers, writers, and speakers;
- be able to communicate effectively, concisely, coherently, and imaginatively;
- recognize the power of language and use that power ethically and creatively; and
- be at ease communicating in an increasingly technological world.

For the benefit of Colorado students, educators, parents, and communities can now focus their attention and energy on creating the conditions under which all students can meet these expectations. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the education community to intervene at the earliest point in the child's formal educational experience where, through careful observation, it becomes apparent that a child is not progressing in a manner which will lead to the meeting of these standards.

Colorado Model Content Standards For Reading and Writing

Page Index: Terms and Topics

abbreviations 10
academic 14, 17
accuracy 11
adjectives 10
adverbs 10
alphabetizing 13
analysis 8, 11
appendices 14
articulate 11
audience 4, 7-9
author 11, 16
autobiographies 6, 17

bibliography 14
book report 7
books 8
borrowed information 14
bulletin boards 14
business communications 8

capitalization 4, 9, 10
captions 13
career 6, 8, 14
career issues 17
catalog 14
cause/effect relationship 7
CD-ROM 14
chapter heading 13
character 12, 16
character development 12
charts 10
citations 14
citizenship 7
class newsletter 7
classic literature 16
clauses 10
common themes 17
communicate 7
communication 3, 7
community 7
comparing & contrasting 5, 7
comparisons 10
complex sentences 10
compound sentences 10
comprehension skills 5
concepts 7
conclusions 11
conjunctions 10
consumers of information 13
content 12
content area 16
content area reading 16
context clues 5

credit 13, 14
critiquing 12
cultural influences 11
culture 16, 17

data 13
databases 14
detail 8, 12
devises 7
dialect 7
dialogue 12.
diction 16
dictionaries 10
directions 6, 11
discussion 16
documented 14
documents 8
draft 7, 8
dramatic techniques 8
drawing conclusions 11, 12

e-mail addresses 14
edit written communication 7
editing speech 8
electronic information 13, 14
electronic media 14
electronic text 14
elements 16
encyclopedia 8
end notes 14
entry menu features 13
essays 6, 17
ethnic background 16
ethnic writers 16
evaluations 8, 9, 13
events 16
exceptions 10
explanation 8

fact 11-13
fiction 16
fictional techniques 8
figurative language 7, 16
figures of speech 5, 13
fluency 3
folk tales 16
foreshadowing 5

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

formal logic 12
formal papers 9
geography 8
glossaries 13
government publications 9
grammar 4, 9, 10

handwriting 7, 8
high expectations 3
historical documents 6
historical influences 11
history 8
homonyms 10
homophones 10
hypertext media 14

icons 13
ideas 7
idiom 16
images 13
improvement 11
indenting 10
indexes 13
inference 5
information 4, 5, 13, 14
information use 3
information-retrieval skills 13
interjections 10
interlibrary 14
interpretation of text 11
interviews 8
irregular noun 10

journals 14

key word searches 13

language skills 3
language usage 5
laser disc 14
legends 16
legibility 7
leisure time 14
letters 8
library 14
life-long learning skills 9
line spacing 10
listening 4, 11
listing 7, 14
lists 7
literacy 13
literary "classic" 16
literary analysis 6
literary criticism 6
literary qualities 12
literary terminology 16
literature 3, 4-8, 16, 17
locate 13

magazines 6, 8
main idea 5, 14
manuscript forms 10
materials 4, 5, 13
meaning 7
media 4, 9, 13, 14
media sources 13
messages 8
metaphor 5
microfiche 14
modification 10
modifiers 9, 10
mood 16
myths 16

narration 7
national experience 16
newspapers 6, 8
news articles 8
nonfiction 16, 17
nonfiction material 6
notes 14
nouns 10
novels 6, 16, 17
numbering 14

opinion 8, 11, 12
oral presentations 7, 9
organization 5, 8, 13, 14
organizational features 13, 14
outlining 7, 14

page numbers 13, 10
paragraphing 10
parallel structure 10
paraphrase 13
parts of speech 10
passwords 13
perspectives 11, 16
persuasion 7, 8
phonic rules 5, 10
phrases 10
picture clues 5
plan 7
plays 6, 16, 17
plot 12, 16
plot development 12
poems 6, 16, 17
poetic techniques 8
poetry 6, 16, 17
point of view 11, 12, 16
possessives 10
practice 7
predicting 5, 11, 12
prefixes 5, 10
prepositions 10
presentation 7, 11
previewing 5
problem 16

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

problem/solutions 7
procedures 7
product 7, 13, 14
professional challenges 14
pronoun 10
pronoun case 10
proofread 7, 8
published work 10
pull-down menus 13
punctuation 4, 9, 10
purpose 4, 5, 7, 11-14

questions 11, 12
quotations 10

read 4, 5
reader 11
reading 4, 5, 11, 12, 14, 16
reading strategies 5, 13
reasoning 11
reference 4, 5, 13, 14
relevancy of information 11
relevant 13
reliability 11
reports 8
research 14
resources 10, 14
revision 7, 8
rhymes 6, 16
root words 10
roots 5

scanning 5
science 8
scientific communications 8
searches 14
self-evaluator 9, 10
self-improvement 14
self-monitoring 5
sentence structure 4, 9
sequence 5
setting 12, 16
short stories 6, 16, 17
simile 5
simple sentences 10
skills 7
skimming 5
solution 16
solve problems 11, 12
source materials 8
sources 13
speaking 4, 6-9, 11, 12, 16, 17
spell checkers 10
spelling 4, 9, 10, 14
stories 6-8, 11, 17
strategies 5-7
structure 13, 14
study 7
style 8-10, 16
subject/verb agreement 9, 10
success 3, 7
suffixes 5, 10
summarize 5, 13supporting 8
symbolism 5, 7
synthesis 8, 13

tables of content 13
teachers 7
technical communications 8
technical documents 14
technical information 7, 8
technical manuals 9
technical material 6, 16
technical publications 5, 6, 8, 9
technical vocabulary 8
technical writing 6
technological age 13
technological information 14
technological sources 13
technology 3, 4, 14
text 13
theme 12, 16
thesis 9, 16
thinking 4, 7, 11
time period 17
titles 10
tone 8
tools for learning 3
tools for writing 7
topic 7, 8, 14

United States 17
United States literature 16
usage 4, 9

verbs 10
viewing 4, 11, 12
vocabulary 5-8, 12, 16
voice 8

word order clues 5
word origins 5
word processing 7, 8
work recognition skills 5
workplace 7
world literature 17
writing 4, 7-9, 11, 12, 14

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Colorado Model Content Standards

READING AND WRITING

1. **Students read and understand a variety of materials.**

2. **Students write and speak for a variety of purposes and audiences.**

3. **Students write and speak using conventional grammar, usage, sentence structure, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling.**

4. **Students apply thinking skills to their reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing.**

5. **Students read to locate, select, and make use of relevant information from a variety of media, reference, and technological sources.**

6. **Students read and recognize literature as a record of human experience.**

STANDARD 1:

Students read and understand a variety of materials.

In order to meet this standard, students will

- use comprehension skills such as previewing, predicting, inferring, comparing and contrasting, re-reading and self-monitoring, summarizing, identifying the author's purpose, determining the main idea, and applying knowledge of foreshadowing, metaphor, simile, symbolism, and other figures of speech;
- make connections between their reading and what they already know, and identify what they need to know about a topic before reading about it;
- adjust reading strategies for different purposes such as reading carefully, idea by idea; skimming and scanning; fitting materials into an organizational pattern, such as reading a novel chronologically; finding information to support particular ideas; and finding the sequence of steps in a technical publication;
- use word recognition skills and resources such as phonics, context clues, picture clues, word origins, and word order clues; reference guides; roots, prefixes, and suffixes of words for comprehension; and
- use information from their reading to increase vocabulary and enhance language usage.

RATIONALE:

The goal for students at all levels is that they know and can use strategies--various ways of unlocking the meaning of words and larger blocks of text--to become successful readers. The strategies are applied in increasingly difficult reading material at each grade level. At all levels, students should be challenged to read literature and other materials that stimulate their interests and intellectual abilities. Reading from a wide variety of texts, both assigned and student selected, provides experience in gaining information and pleasure from diverse forms and perspectives.

Note: A reference list of sources of book lists can be found at the end of the Reading and Writing Standards. None of these book lists have been endorsed by the Colorado State Board of Education.

GRADES K-4

In grades K-4, what the students know and are able to do includes

- using a full range of strategies to comprehend materials such as directions, nonfiction material, rhymes and poems, and stories.

GRADES 5-8

As students in 5-8 extend their knowledge, what they know and are able to do includes

- using a full range of strategies to comprehend technical writing, newspapers, magazines, poetry, short stories, plays, and novels in addition to the types of reading material mentioned above. Students extend their thinking and understanding as they read stories about people from similar and different backgrounds.

GRADES 9-12

As students in grades 9-12 extend their knowledge, what they know and are able to do includes

- using a full range of strategies to comprehend essays, speeches, autobiographies, and first-person historical documents in addition to the types of literature mentioned above.

For students extending their English/Language Arts education beyond the standards, what they know and are able to do **may** include

- using a full range of strategies to comprehend literary criticism and literary analysis, professional and technical journals, and professional-level reading materials that match their career or academic interests.

STANDARD 2:

Students write and speak for a variety of purposes and audiences.

In order to meet this standard, students will

- write and speak for a variety of purposes such as telling stories, presenting analytical responses to literature, conveying technical information, explaining concepts and procedures, and persuading;
- write and speak for audiences such as peers, teachers, and the community;
- plan, draft, revise, proofread, and edit written communications;
- use a variety of devices such as figurative language, symbolism, dialect, and precise vocabulary to convey meaning;
- organize written and oral presentations using strategies such as lists, outlining, cause/effect relationships, comparison/contrast, problem/solution, and narration; and
- use handwriting and at the most appropriate time, word processing to produce a product that is legible.

RATIONALE:

Writing and speaking are essential tools for learning, for success in the workplace, and for responsible citizenship. Developing a range of writing and speaking abilities requires extensive study, practice, and thinking. Students need frequent opportunities to write and speak for different audiences and purposes, and they need to be able to communicate expressively, informatively, and analytically. Growth in writing and speaking abilities occurs by applying skills to increasingly challenging communication tasks.

GRADES K-4

In grades K-4, what students know and are able to do includes

- generating topics and developing ideas for a variety of writing and speaking purposes *(for example, telling a story, publishing a class newsletter, writing a letter to an adult, writing or orally presenting a book report, creating and producing a play, introducing a speaker or an event, narrating a presentation);*

- organizing their speaking and writing;
- choosing vocabulary that communicates their messages clearly and precisely;
- revising and editing speech and writing; and
- creating readable documents with legible handwriting or word processing at the appropriate time.

GRADES 5-8

As students in grades 5-8 extend their knowledge, what they know and are able to do includes

- writing stories, letters, and reports with greater detail and supporting material;
- choosing vocabulary and figures of speech that communicate clearly;
- drafting, revising, editing, and proofreading for a legible final copy;
- applying skills in analysis, synthesis, evaluation, and explanation to their writing and speaking;
- incorporating source materials into their speaking and writing *(for example, interviews, news articles, encyclopedia information);*
- writing and speaking in the content areas *(for example, science, geography, history, literature),* using the technical vocabulary of the subject accurately; and
- recognizing stylistic elements such as voice, tone, and style.

GRADES 9-12

As students in grades 9-12 extend their knowledge, what they know and are able to do includes

- using fictional, dramatic, and poetic techniques in writing;
- conveying technical information in a written form appropriate to the audience;
- supporting an opinion using various forms of persuasion (factual or emotional) in speaking and writing;
- incorporating material from a wider range of sources *(for example, newspapers, magazines, interviews, technical publications, books)* in their writing and speaking;
- selecting a focused topic and drafting, revising, editing, and proofreading a legible final copy;
- writing in various specialized fields such as career and academic interest areas *(for example, scientific, technical, business communications);* and
- experimenting with stylistic elements such as voice, tone, and style.

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For students extending their English/Language Arts education beyond these standards, what they know and are able to do **may** include

- writing longer, formal papers using sources such as technical journals and government publications to support an original thesis;
- making oral presentations for audiences within or outside the school in a variety of media;
- using style books or technical manuals to become self-evaluators of their writing; and
- analyzing, synthesizing, and evaluating a variety of written and spoken material.

STANDARD 3:

Students write and speak using conventional grammar, usage, sentence structure, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling.

In order to meet this standard, students will

- know and use correct grammar in speaking and writing;
- apply correct usage in speaking and writing;
- use correct sentence structure in writing; and
- demonstrate correct punctuation, capitalization, and spelling.

RATIONALE:

Students need to know and be able to use standard English. Proficiency in this standard plays an important role in how the writer or speaker is understood and perceived. All skills in this standard are reinforced and practiced at all grade levels and should be monitored by both the teacher and student to develop lifelong learning skills.

GRADES K-4

In grades K-4, what the students know and are able to do includes

- knowing and using subject/verb agreement;
- knowing and using correct modifiers;

- knowing and using correct capitalization, punctuation, and abbreviations; and
- spelling frequently used words correctly using phonics rules and exceptions.

GRADES 5-8

As students in grades 5-8 extend their knowledge, what they know and are able to do includes

- identifying the parts of speech such as nouns, pronouns, verbs, adverbs, adjectives, conjunctions, prepositions, and interjections;
- using correct pronoun case, regular and irregular noun and verb forms, and subject-verb agreement involving comparisons in writing and speaking;
- using modifiers, homonyms, and homophones in writing and speaking;
- using simple, compound, complex, and compound/complex sentences in writing and speaking;
- punctuating and capitalizing titles and direct quotations, using possessives, and correct paragraphing in writing;
- using prefixes, root words, and suffixes correctly in writing and speaking;
- expanding spelling skills to include more complex words;
- demonstrating use of conventional spelling in their published works; and
- using resources such as spell checkers, dictionaries, and charts to monitor their spelling accuracy.

GRADES 9-12

As students in grades 9-12 extend their knowledge, what they know and are able to do includes

- using pronoun reference correctly in writing and speaking;
- using phrases and clauses for purposes of modification and parallel structure in writing and speaking;
- using internal capitalization and punctuation of secondary quotations in writing;
- using manuscript forms specified in various style manuals for writing (*for example, indenting for extended quotations, precise placement and form of page numbers, appropriate line spacing);* and
- refining spelling and grammatical skills and becoming a self-evaluator of their writing and speaking.

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STANDARD 4:

Students apply thinking skills to their reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing.

In order to meet this standard, students will

- make predictions, analyze, draw conclusions, and discriminate between fact and opinion in writing, reading, speaking, listening, and viewing;
- use reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing to define and solve problems;
- recognize, express, and defend points of view orally and in writing;
- identify the purpose, perspective, and historical and cultural influences of a speaker, author, or director; and
- evaluate the reliability, accuracy, and relevancy of information.

RATIONALE:

Students use reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing to think and learn. By moving beyond a literal interpretation of text to an analysis of an author's, speaker's, or director's purpose and perspectives, students practice and improve their higher-level thinking skills. Students need to recognize and evaluate different points of view and to follow a line of reasoning to its logical conclusion. Students need to think about their writing and reading skills and work toward improvement.

GRADES K-4

In grades K-4, what students know and are able to do includes

- recognizing an author's point of view;
- predicting and drawing conclusions about stories;
- differentiating between fact and opinion in written and spoken forms;
- using reading, writing, speaking, and listening to define and solve problems;
- responding to written and oral presentations as a reader, listener, and articulate speaker;
- formulating questions about what they read, write, hear, and view; and
- using listening skills to understand directions.

GRADES 5-8

As students extend their knowledge, what they know and are able to do includes

- recognizing an author's or speaker's point of view and purpose, separating fact from opinion;
- using reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing skills to solve problems and answer questions;
- making predictions, drawing conclusions, and analyzing what they read, hear, and view;
- recognizing, expressing, and defending a point of view orally in an articulate manner and in writing; and
- determining literary quality based on elements such as the author's use of vocabulary, character development, plot development, description of setting, and realism of dialogue.

GRADES 9-12

As students in grades 9-12 extend their knowledge, what they know and are able to do includes

- recognizing an author's point of view, purpose, and historical and cultural context;
- using reading, writing, listening, articulate speaking, and viewing to solve problems;
- knowing what constitutes literary quality based on elements such as the author's point of view, the author's selection of significant details, theme development, and the author's reflection of events and ideas of his or her lifetime; and
- critiquing the content of written work and oral presentations.

For students extending their English/Language Arts education beyond the standard, what they know and are able to do **may** include

- applying principles of formal logic to written and oral texts.

STANDARD 5:

Students read to locate, select, and make use of relevant information from a variety of media, reference, and technological sources.

In order to meet this standard, students will

- select relevant material for reading, writing, and speaking purposes;
- understand the structure, organization, and use of various media, reference, and technological sources as they select information for their reading and writing;
- paraphrase, summarize, organize, and synthesize information;
- give credit for others' ideas, images, or information; and
- use information to produce a quality product.

RATIONALE:

In this age of information and technology, people need reading and information-retrieval skills that will enable them to access facts, images, and text from many sources. The sheer volume of data makes it necessary for information seekers to be able to wade through a maze of facts, figures, and images, and to identify what is useful and relevant.

Knowing how to locate, evaluate, and make use of an ever-increasing amount of information demands a broader repertoire of reading strategies. This implies an expanded definition of literacy that includes reading for information in a technological age. Students need to become discerning consumers of information.

GRADES K-4

In grades K-4, what students know and are able to do includes

- using organizational features of printed text (*for example, page numbering, alphabetizing, glossaries, chapter heading, tables of contents, indexes, captions);*
- recognizing organizational features of electronic information (*for example, pull-down menus, icons, key word searches);*
- using organizational features to locate media or electronic information (*for example, passwords, entry menu features, pull-down menus, icons, key word searches);*

- taking notes, outlining, and identifying main ideas in resource materials;
- sorting information as it relates to a specific topic or purpose; and
- giving credit for borrowed information by telling or listing sources.

GRADES 5-8

As students in grades 5-8 extend their knowledge, what they know and are able to do includes

- using organizational features of printed text such as prefaces, afterwards, and appendices;
- using organizational features of electronic information (*for example, microfiche headings and numbering, headings for accessing nested information in hypertext media, electronic media CD-ROM, laser disc*), and library and interlibrary catalog databases;
- locating and selecting relevant information;
- using available technology to research and produce an end-product that is accurately documented; and
- giving credit for borrowed information in a bibliography.

GRADES 9-12

As students in grades 9-12 extend their knowledge, what they know and are able to do includes

- using organizational features of printed text such as citations, end notes, and bibliographic references to locate relevant information;
- evaluating information in light of what they know and their specific needs;
- using organizational features of electronic text such as bulletin boards, database keyword searches, and e-mail addresses to locate information when technology is available;
- using strategies to gain information from journals, research studies, and technical documents; and
- using available technology to access information, conduct research, and produce a carefully documented product.

For students extending their English/Language Arts education beyond the standards, what they know and are able to do may include

- understanding and applying knowledge of the structure, organization, and use of various media, reference, and technological information sources in their reading and writing as they meet academic, personal, and professional challenges;
- locating information appropriate for their reading and writing purposes such as career and academic interest, leisure time, and self-improvement;

- using information from various resources, both primary and secondary, as a vehicle for expressing their own thoughts, impressions, and ideas;
- giving precise, formal credit for others' ideas, images, or information; and
- planning and presenting multimedia presentations.

STANDARD 6:

Students read and recognize literature as a record of human experience.

In order to meet this standard, students will

- know and use literary terminology;
- read literature to investigate common issues and interests;
- read literature to understand places, people, events, and vocabulary, both familiar and unfamiliar;
- read literature that reflects the uniqueness and integrity of the American experience;
- read classic and contemporary literature, representing various cultural and ethnic traditions from throughout the world; and
- read classic and contemporary literature of the United States about the experiences and traditions of diverse ethnic groups.

RATIONALE:

Literature records human expression in such forms as speeches, poems, novels, stories, nonfiction, essays, plays, films, biographies, and autobiographies by male and female speakers and writers. The study of literary traditions offers a perspective on enduring questions, a glimpse into human motives and conflicts, and a sense of the beauty and power of spoken and written language. In addition, literature transmits and transforms culture; it also enables students to think, communicate, and participate in society. The study of literature and writers of the United States honors the heritage and cultures of all people who live or have lived in America, and it thus helps students develop an understanding of our national experience. A comprehensive literature program fosters habits of reading that carry over into adult life.

Note: A reference list of sources of book lists can be found at the end of the Reading and Writing Standards. None of these book lists have been endorsed by the Colorado State Board of Education.

GRADES K-4

In grades K-4, what students know and are able to do includes

- reading, responding to, and discussing a variety of literature such as folk tales, legends, myths, fiction, rhymes and poems, non-fiction, and content-area reading;
- reading, responding to, and discussing literature as a way to explore the similarities and differences among stories and the ways in which those stories reflect the ethnic background of the author and the culture in which they were written;
- recognizing the concept of classic or enduring literature, and reading and listening to classic works;
- using literary terminology such as setting, plot, character, problem, and solution; and
- using new vocabulary from literature in other context.

GRADES 5-8

As students in grades 5-8 extend their knowledge, what they know and are able to do includes

- reading, responding to, and discussing a variety of novels, poetry, short stories, non-fiction, content-area and technical material, and plays;
- reading, responding to, and discussing literature that represents points of view from places, people, and events that are familiar and unfamiliar;
- distinguishing the elements that characterize and define a literary "classic";
- comparing the diverse voices of our national experience as they read a variety of United States literature;
- using literary terminology accurately, including setting, character, conflict, plot, resolution, theme, foreshadowing, and figurative language; and
- using new vocabulary from literature in other context.

GRADES 9-12

As students in grades 9-12 extend their knowledge, what they know and are able to do includes

- reading, responding to, and discussing novels, poetry, short stories, non-fiction, content-area and technical material, plays, essays, and speeches;
- using literary terminology accurately, such as theme, mood, diction, idiom, perspective, style, and point of view;
- identifying recurrent themes in United States literature; and
- developing and supporting a thesis about the craft and significance of particular works of literature, both classic and contemporary, from a variety of ethnic writers.

For students extending their English/Language Arts education beyond the standards, what they know and are able to do **may** include

- comparing and contrasting stories, novels, poems, and other forms of literature from different countries, time periods, or cultures;
- using novels, poetry, short stories, non-fiction, autobiographies, plays, essays, speeches, literary criticisms and analyses, and any other literature to explore academic, personal, or career issues; and
- understanding the common themes in the literature of the United States and in world literature.

REFERENCE LIST OF SOURCES OF BOOK LISTS

Note: None of these book lists have been endorsed by the Colorado State Board of Education.

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